

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-5, 8-9, 11-15, 18-19, and 21-27 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 11, 26, and 27 being independent. Claims 6, 7, 10, 16, 17, and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1-5, 8-9, 11-15, 18-19, and 21 have been amended. Claims 22-27 are newly presented. Applicants have also amended the title of the invention. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of a claim to foreign priority, as well as an indication that the certified copy of the priority document, submitted July 2, 2001, has been received.

Applicants would like to inform the Examiner that Claims 1-24 of co-pending U.S. Application No. 09/818,607 were provisionally rejected on December 3, 2003, under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting, over Claims 1-21 of this application.

Applicants acknowledge that Claims 8-9 and 18-19 are considered to contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-3, 10-13, and 20-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,913,193 ("Huang"). Claims 4-7 and 14-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Huang in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,883 ("Campbell"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 of the invention, as amended, recites a synthesis unit selection apparatus including obtaining means for obtaining a string of synthesis units to one or more orders, which satisfies received strings, based upon a minimum distortion standard, wherein the string of synthesis units is obtained by concatenating stored synthesis units, and the minimum distortion standard determines an order of distortion values that are produced upon obtaining the string of synthesis units from the stored synthesis units; and selection means for selecting a synthesis unit to be stored in a memory based on the string of synthesis units obtained by the obtaining means. Independent Claim 11, as amended, recites a generally corresponding method, and independent Claim 27 recites a generally corresponding program. Independent Claim 26 recites a synthesis unit selection apparatus with an obtaining unit and a selection unit.

According to the invention, synthesis units which form a path with a minimum distortion can be selected and registered in a synthesis unit inventory. Therefore, the size of the synthesis unit inventory can be reduced.

Huang teaches the computation of all possible sequences of instances for a diphone string. The distortion between the instance and the instance immediately following is determined as a Euclidean distance. Distortions over all of the instances in an instance sequence are accumulated, and the best instance sequence having a minimum accumulated distortion is selected, based on the accumulated distortion.

Applicants submit that Huang does not teach or suggest obtaining a string of synthesis units to one or more orders based upon a minimum distortion standard, the string of synthesis units being obtained by concatenating stored synthesis units, nor selection means for selecting a synthesis unit to be stored in a memory based on the string of synthesis units.

Further, Applicants submit that, while the secondary reference to Campbell may disclose selecting Nbest sequences, it does not teach or suggest the features noted above, whether taken alone or in combination with Huang.

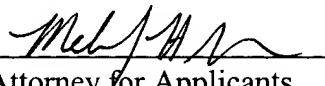
Accordingly, Applicants submit that the independent claims patentably distinguish the invention over the cited art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the dependent claims should be allowable for the same reasons that the base claims from which they depend are allowable, and further due to the additional features that they recite. Individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the application at the Examiner's earliest convenience are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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